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BULLETIN

PLANES - SOVIET

WASHINGTON-(AP)-A UNITED STATES RECONNAISSANCE BOMBER FOUGHT OFF A RUSSIAN-MADE MIG-15 JET FIGHTER OFF THE EAST COAST OF KAMCHATKA SUNDAY.

CZ215PES 3/17

137- WASHINGTON—ADD PLANES-SOVIET (136)

THE AIR FORCE, ANNOUNCING THE INCIDENT, SAID TODAY IT TOOK PLACE ABOUT 25 MILES EAST OF THE SIBERIAN PENINSULA IN THE NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN.

THE AIR FORCE GAVE THIS ACCOUNT:

THE U.S. PLANE, A B-50, WAS ON A "ROUTINE WEATHER RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHT FROM AN ALASKA AIR BASE."

TWO RUSSIAN TYPE MIG-15'S INTERCEPTED THE AMERICAN AIRCRAFT BUT ONLY ONE ATTACHED.

THE U.S. PLANE "RETURNED FIRE BUT THERE APPEARED TO BE NO DAMAGE TO EITHER CRAFT."

THE ANNOUNCEMENT DID NOT PINPOINT THE SCENE OF THE ACTION FURTHER, LEAVING IMMEDIATELY UNANSWERED THE QUESTION AS TO WHETHER THE FIGHT TOOK PLACE NEAR THE SOUTHERN TIP OF KAMCHATKA, OPPOSITE THE U.S. OWNED ALEUTIAN ISLAND CHAIN, OR FURTHER NORTH IN THE BERING SEA.

THE TIME OF THE FIGHT WAS REPORTED AS 9 P.M., (EST) ON MARCH 14, THE UNITED STATES DATE, AND 12:30 P.M. MARCH 15 AT THE LOCATION OF THE FIGHT.

THIS NEW INCIDENT COMES ATOP A SERIES OF EARLIER INCIDENTS AND THE RECENT SHOOTING DOWN OF TWO ALLIED PLANES IN WESTERN GERMANY.

ON MARCH 10, FIGHTER PLANES FLYING OUT OF COMMUNIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA SHOT DOWN AN AMERICAN FIGHTER PLANE WHICH WAS ON PATROL IN WESTERN GERMANY. TWO DAYS LATER, SOVIET PLANES SENT A BRITISH BOMBER DOWN IN FLAMES, KILLING FIVE OF ITS SEVEN CREWMEN.

U.S. WEATHER RECONNAISSANCE PLANES HAVE BEEN MAKING REGULAR FLIGHTS OVER ALL NORTHERN AREAS AS FAR AS THE NORTH POLE. THIS IS THE FIRST OFFICIALLY REPORTED INSTANCE, HOWEVER, OF THE PLANES APPROACHING SO NEAR TO RUSSIAN TERRITORY.

AT 25 MILES AT SEA, THE PLANE WAS OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS AND NOT OVER ANY RUSSIAN TERRITORIAL WATERS.

THE FOUR-ENGINE B-50 IS A LARGER, MORE POWERFUL VERSION OF THE B-29 LONG-RANGE BOMBER.

IT HAS FIVE GUN TURRETS EQUIPPED WITH 13 .50 CALIBRE MACHINE GUNS. IT HAS A RANGE OF MORE THAN 6,000 MILES, AND CAN CARRY MORE THAN 20,000 POUNDS OF BOMBS.

ONE B-50, THE LUCKY LADY, HAS FLOWN NON-STOP AROUND THE WORLD WITH THE AID OF AERIAL REFUELING.

CZ225PES 3/17

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WASHINGTON—ADD PLANE-SOVIET (187)

PRESIDENT EISENHOWER'S PRESS SECRETARY, JAMES C. HAGERTY, SAID THE PRESIDENT WAS INFORMED ABOUT THE NEW INCIDENT BUT THAT THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD HAVE NO COMMENT.

JK448P 3/17

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WASHINGTON—ADD PLANES-SOVIET (137) SUB FOLLOWING FOR 6TH GRAPH BEGINNING "THE ANNOUNCEMENT, ETC. X X X THE BERING SEA."

THE AIR FORCE LOCATED THE SCENE OF ACTION AT LATITUDE 54 DEGREES AND TWO SECONDS NORTH AND EAST LONGITUDE 161 DEGREES AND FOUR SECONDS. THIS WOULD PLACE THE ACTION ABOUT 100 MILES EAST AND SLIGHTLY NORTH OF PETRO-PAVLOVSK, A RUSSIAN MILITARY BASE ON THE SOUTHERN TIP OF THE PENINSULA. THE AIR FORCE ALSO REVEALED, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, THAT THE B-50 WAS BASED AT EIELSON FIELD NEAR FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, ABOUT 2,000 MILES FROM THE SCENE OF THE FIGHT. IT DID NOT SAY IMMEDIATELY WHETHER THE AMERICAN CRAFT TOUCHED DOWN AT ANY INTERMEDIATE FIELD ON EITHER THE OUTWARD OR INBOUND LEG OF THE FLIGHT.

REPORTS RECEIVED BY THE AIR FORCE SAID THAT WHILE THE ONE MIG WAS ATTACKING, THE SECOND RUSSIAN JET FIGHTER REMAINED WELL ABOVE THE ENCOUNTER.

JA314P 3/17

WASHINGTON—ADD PLANES-SOVIET (137)

THE AIR FORCE SAID THAT IT FLEW WEATHER RECONNAISSANCE DAILY AND THAT SOME OF THESE FLIGHTS RANGE FROM THE NORTH POLE INTO THE AREA WHERE THE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE. THE AIR FORCE DECLINED TO SAY IF SUCH FLIGHTS HAD GONE INTO THIS PARTICULAR SECTION BEFORE.

SEN. MAGNUSON SAID IT APPEARED TO HIM THAT THE U.S. PLANE WAS 600 MILES WEST OF THE NEAREST AMERICAN TERRITORY IN THE ALEUTIANS, AND THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND WHY THE RUSSIANS MIGHT WANT TO CHALLENGE IT.

"BUT THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR THEIR SHOOTING FIRST," HE SAID. "WE CERTAINLY OUGHT TO PROTEST THAT. THEY SHOULD HAVE RADIOED THE PLANE AND ASKED IF IT WAS LOST. IT WAS NOT A MILITARY PLANE BUT A WEATHER PLANE AND THEY SHOULD HAVE SEEN THAT."

MAGNUSON SAID THERE ARE SOME RUSSIAN-OWNED ISLANDS BETWEEN THE ALEUTIANS AND KAMCHATKA.

THE WASHINGTON SENATOR SAID ONE POINT THAT INTERESTED HIM WAS WHY THERE WERE MIGS IN THE AREA. HE SAID HE PRESUMED THEY MIGHT BE THERE AS PROTECTION FOR A SMALL NAVAL BASE ON THE KAMCHATKA PENINSULA.

JK344) 3'17

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WASHINGTON—ADD PLANES-SOVIET (168)

AIR FORCE REPORTS FROM ALASKA SAID THAT THE BRIEF ACTION TOOK PLACE AT AN ALTITUDE OF ABOUT 13,000 FEET. ONE OF THE TWO MIGS DROPPED DOWN ABOUT 2,000 FEET AND MADE A CURVING TURN INTO THE B-50, OPENING FIRE WHEN IT WAS OFF THE TAIL OF THE AMERICAN CRAFT.

THE AIR FORCE SAID THAT THE AMERICAN TAIL GUNNER FOLLOWED THE RUSSIAN AS HE MADE HIS ATTACKING SWEEP BUT HELD FIRE FROM HIS 50-

CALIBER GUNS UNTIL AFTER THE COMMUNIST FIGHTER DELIVERED HIS BURST. THE ATTACKING RUSSIAN PROMPTLY BROKE OFF AFTER NOTING THE RETURN FIRE, SWERVED AWAY AND WAS REJOINED BY THE SECOND MIG WHICH REMAINED OVER THE SCENE OF ACTION BUT TOOK NO PART IN IT.

THE PILOT OF THE AMERICAN BOMBER WAS REPORTED TO HAVE STARTED EVASIVE ACTION AS SOON AS THE JET FIGHTERS APPROACHED AND THE U.S. PLANE TURNED ABRUPTLY EASTWARD AND RETURNED TO ALASKA.

JK357P 3/17

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WASHINGTON-ADD PLANE-SOVIET (174)

SEN. FLANDERS ANNOUNCED HE WILL ASK THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE OF WHICH HE IS A MEMBER TO CHECK WHETHER "AN ELEMENT OF CHIP ON THE SHOULDER" ON THE PART OF THE U.S. PLANE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A FACTOR IN THE INCIDENT.

FLANDERS RECENTLY SAID HE WOULD ADVOCATE A GET-TOUGH POLICY WITH THE RUSSIANS IN GERMANY IF IT BECAME CLEAR THAT THEY HAVE SET A PATTERN OF OFFENSIVE AERIAL ACTION AGAINST AMERICAN AIRCRAFT.

HE ELABORATED ON THAT TO A REPORTER TODAY, DECLARING "THIS OF COURSE WAS AN OUTRAGEOUS ACTION BY THE COMMUNISTS. BUT ON ITS FACE IT SEEMS SOMEWHAT LESS OUTRAGEOUS THAN THE JUMPING OF THE UNARMED U.S. AND BRITISH PLANES OVER GERMANY."

"WE MIGHT HAVE BEEN A LITTLE RECKLESS VENTURING THAT CLOSE TO KAMCHATKA JUST TO OBSERVE THE WEATHER." HE SAID, "AN ELEMENT OF CHIP ON THE SHOULDER, SO TO SPEAK. COULDN'T WE OBSERVE THE WEATHER A LITTLE LESS CLOSE TO KAMCHATKA?"

BUT HE DESCRIBED AS "A TICKER HAPPY GESTURE" THE MIG'S ATTACK ON THE PLANE.

JK436P 3/17